VIETNAM COURIER

Jan. 5
1970
No. 250
7th Year

Information Weekly — E.O.: 46 Tran Hung Dao Street, Hanoi — Democratic Republic of Viet Nam

Happy New Year

VIET NAM COURIER

PRESIDENT TON DUC THANG'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

Hanoi, January 1st, 1970

Dear fellow-countrymen and fighters throughout the country,

On the occasion of the New Year, I convey, on behalf of the Party Central Committee and the Government, our best wishes to our fellow-countrymen, fighters, old folks, various nationalities, religious communities, Vietnamese overseas, youth and children.

1969 was for our people's resistance to US aggression, for national salvation another tremendously fruitful year.

Our Southern people and combatants recorded in powerful, skilful and relentless actions further brilliant feats of arms, wiped out a large amount of enemy manpower and war means and actively set up revolutionary power at various levels. The South Viet Nam Congress of People's Representatives and the formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam marked a substantial advance of the South Vietnamese people in the achievement of broad national unity in order to win complete victory over the US aggressors.

In the North, our workers, collective farmers, socialist-minded intellectuals and our entire army and people brought into full play the spirit of revolutionary offensive, overcame every difficulty, maintained and expanded production, developed culture and strengthened national defence, always ready to fight and fight courageously, lending wholehearted assistance to the liberation war of our heroic South Vietnamese kith and kin.

Last year, our people's just struggle enlisted strong sympathy and support from the fraternal socialist countries, from nations now striving for independence and freedom, and from the world's peoples including US progressives who initiated a large-scale drive to prevail on the US ruling circles to stop their aggressive war against Viet Nam, and rapidly and totally bring US troops home.

I take this opportunity to send our brothers and friends in the five continents the best wishes and heartfelt thanks of our people and Government.

The US aggressors' final failure is a foregone conclusion, but they still are reluctant to give up their aggressive designs upon our country. Their "Vietnamization of the war" is precisely a plan to prolong the war and their occupation of South Viet Nam, to cling to the puppet army and administration, to use Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese for US neo-colonialist ends.

Let our fellow-countrymen all over the country act upon President Ho Chi Minh's last directions, persist in, and carry through, the war of resistance to a finish to liberate the South, defend the North and achieve ultimate national reunification!

In response to the appeal of the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, let our people and combatants of the South strengthen their solidarity, rush forward in the flush of victory and "fight until the Yanks quit and the puppets topple"!

Let our fellow-countrymen and cadres of the North vie with each other in overfulfilling the 1970 State plan, carry on the building of material and technical foundations for socialism, see satisfactorily to the people's welfare, increase their vigilance, frustrate all machiavellian manoeuvres of the enemy, and discharge their obligations as the great rear toward the great frontline!

Our people will surely win! The US imperialists will certainly fail!

Long live the peaceful, unified, independent, democratic, prosperous and strong Viet Nam!

With affectionate and "determination-to-win" greetings.

President
of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam
TON DUC THANG

Forward! Our Total Triumph Is an Assurance Double Sure!

— *Excerpts from* NHAN DAN *Editorial of January 1st, 1970* —

THE objective for which our people are fighting is the total withdrawal of US troops, collapse of the puppet army and administration, abolition of neo-colonialism in any forms and complete liberation of the southern part of the Fatherland. So long as the US troops are not withdrawn completely, and the puppet army and administration are on their feet, the Vietnamese people will fight on. This is the unshakeable singleness of purpose of the Vietnamese armed forces and people throughout the country. True, the US imperialists have not yet given up their wicked designs, but they can by no means turn the tide. Since more than half a million US troops have failed, the puppet troops, no matter how numerous they may be, are no help. After foiling two strategic counter-offensives of the US troops, the South Viet Nam armed forces and people have entered a new stage in their resistance with the spring 1968 dramatic general offensive. Since then our people's fight has been developing favourably, winning greater and greater successes. The new stage of the resistance is a bitter one in the military, political and diplomatic fields between the Vietnamese people on the one hand and the aggressors and their lackeys on the other, before the Vietnamese people completely carry the day. The enemy are haunted by the frightful visions of the day when their dirty war of aggression ends up in smoke together with their wild ambitions. They are plunging headlong in the most desperate efforts and resorting to the most atrocious war methods. The Vietnamese people are prepared to deal them still more stunning blows, inflicting on them bigger losses in manpower and war means than acceptable until they are unable to continue the costly war and have to renounce their designs and reconcile themselves to defeat.

THE Vietnamese people are prepared to answer the US war-maniacs' threat to prolong the war with a more and more powerful and persistent fight. The socialist North Viet Nam is the first factor of victory for

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At the "May 19" Electrical Works

48th Plenary Session of Paris Conference on Viet Nam (Dec. 30, 1969)

Mr. HA VAN LAU REVIEWS CONFERENCE WORK IN 1969

REVIEWING at the 48th session the situation of the Paris Conference on Viet Nam in 1969, Ambassador Ha Van Lau of the DRVN Government delegation pointed to the goodwill of the Vietnamese people, the DRVN Government and the RSVN PRG and stressed: The DRVN Government has sent its delegation to the Paris Conference with the desire to settle peacefully the Viet Nam issue on the basis of respect for the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people and the right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people. This line has guided all the activities of the DRVN Government delegation since the start of the Conference.

Right at the opening of the Conference, he said, the announced it would pull out from South Viet Nam totally and unconditionally US troops and those of the other foreign countries in the US camp within six months.

Just like the Johnson administration, he added, the Nixon administration is intensifying terror raids and bombings in South Viet Nam, while clinging to the "mutual troop withdrawal" absurd demand at the conference table, maintaining the Thieu-Ky-Khiem puppet administration, and setting its face against the sensible proposal of the RSVN PRG on the formation of a provisional coalition government in South Viet Nam.

He also dismissed Nixon's contention that there would be "massacres" if the US pulled out all its troops, as a pretext for keeping US troops in South Viet Nam and continuing to perpetrate mass slaughters there.

Ambassador Ha Van Lau concluded: "The Paris Conference is till marking time while the war in South Viet Nam is dragging on. The only cause is the Nixon administration's persistence in its aggression against South Viet Nam and attempt to secure a "position of strength" to negotiate from. The Nixon administration is trying to downgrade and sabotage the Paris Conference. It must therefore be held fully responsible for the consequences arising therefrom.

"WITH *VIETNAMIZATION*, THE UNITED STATES WILL ONLY DRAG OUT THE WAR"

Says DRVN Foreign Minister

DRVN Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh on December 24, 1969 granted an interview to Tsuda Tatsuo, correspondent of the *Kyodo News Service*.

Following are the questions and answers:

QUESTION 1 — *In his November 3, 1969 address, President Nixon laid stress on his policy of "Vietnamization" of the war. On December 15 he announced the withdrawal of a new contingent of 50,000 American troops. Would you please, Mr. Vice-Premier, give your opinion on President Nixon's Viet Nam policy and the effect of this policy on the Paris Conference on Viet Nam.*

ANSWER — In the teeth of its heavy setbacks, the United States continues its efforts to cling to South Viet Nam. To "Vietnamize" is to keep in office the Saigon puppet administration and replace American combat troops with puppet troops in the US aggression in Viet Nam. To "Vietnamize" is to pit Vietnamese against Vietnamese and turn the US war formerly waged mainly with US troops into a US war conducted mainly with puppet troops. President Nixon said he would go ahead with the "Vietnamization" "regardless of what happens in the negotiations." His administration has consequently maintained its obstinate attitude at the talks and in fact even tried to downgrade the Paris Conference on Viet Nam.

The US ruling circles are now raising a ballyhoo to prove that "Vietnamization" is the only sound way to bring the Viet Nam war to a conclusion, that the current cutback of a certain number of American troops is possible thanks to "Vietnamization."

One still remembers that the bitter failure of the "special war"—an American war "Vietnamized" to the highest level—had forced the US ruling circles to "Americanize" it to the utmost. But the realities in South Viet Nam have shown that as "Americanization" of the war progresses, US setbacks and its difficulties in all spheres grow in proportion. How can the puppet army now turn the tables in South Viet Nam, a thing which half a million US troops have failed in accomplishing? With "Vietnamization," the United States will only drag out the war instead of ending it; it will only prolong the presence of hundreds of thousands of US troops in South Viet Nam in an attempt to impose neo-colonialism there and extend the partition of Viet Nam.

Far from being duped by US tricks, US progressives and the world peoples as a whole including the Japanese people are militating more and more vigorously for the total and rapid withdrawal of all US troops and the cessation of the aggressive war in Viet Nam.

The South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam have put forward the ten-point over-all solution which is very reasonable and sensible. President Ho Chi Minh hailed it as "a sound way to settle the Viet Nam issue which takes into consideration the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people, the interests of the United States and universal aspiration for peace," and as "an honourable way for the US to get out of the war."

The Vietnamese people will keep up their resistance against aggression to defend their independence and freedom until not a single American aggressor is left on their soil. Acting with a singleness of purpose upon President Ho Chi Minh's last instructions, they will persist in, and push up, their patriotic effort till total victory.

QUESTION 2 — *The American press has shown a great interest in the Son My case. Besides, at the approach of Christmas, the Americans have talked much about the question of American prisoners-of-war detained in North Viet Nam. Would you give your opinion on this matter?*

ANSWER — The Son My massacre which was recently brought to light has stirred up a strong emotion in world public opinion, especially in the US. Many Americans have noted most indignantly that the aggressive war have brutalized their sons into odious criminals.

But Son My is only one of the thousands of horrible mass killings by US, puppet and satellite troops in South Viet Nam. The war waged there by the US constitutes in itself a monstrous genocidal crime. The responsibility for the mass murders in Son My, Kong H'Ring, Ba Lang An, etc... rests not only with

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SOUTH VIET NAM

US-Puppet Crimes: More Than 700 People Put to a Slow Death in a Concentration Camp

ACCORDING to incomplete statistics released by *GPA*, from May 1967 to the end of 1968, more than 700 people of different nationalities were put to a slow death in the Tan Tuong concentration camp, Quang Tri province.

GPA announced that since May 1967 the enemy had carried out bombings of utmost atrocity against the southern part of the demilitarized zone, killing hundreds of people, destroying all the villages and houses in the area, ruining thousands of hectares of crops and killing thousands of domestic animals. Afterwards, the US-puppets forcibly took more than 12,000 villagers to the Tan Tuong concentration camp, a barren place along Highway 9, about three kilometres southeast of Cam Lo district town. These people, forced to a most miserable life, preys to utter destitution and diseases, died an atrocious slow death, especially the old agers and children. Within only the second quarter of 1967, more than 300 of them died of starvation or disease.

Their endurance taxed to a cracking point, the inmates rose up in revolt and succeeded in forcing the US-puppets to meet part of their demands for food supply, clothes and building materials, free movement, freedom to glean rice in the surrounding villages, etc. But soon afterwards, the enemy took even more drastic measures by bombing the settlement itself (In July alone 45 people were killed by such bombings). In the last months of 1968, more than 300 out of the total of 3,000 detainees of different nationalities succumbed to famine and diseases of all kinds.

GPA further reported that in Da Nang, Buddhist Superior Thich Phap Ma, in charge of the Buddhist cult at Quan The Am Pagoda on the Non Nuoc mountain, had sent a letter to the US ambassador in Saigon and the puppet administration denouncing that American and puppet troops had on 6 occasions opened artillery fire on the pagoda and taken two diamond gems from the eyes of a Buddha statue in the pagoda.

The letter urged that the US-puppets stop all bombardments against Buddhist worship places and pay compensations to the Quan The Am pagoda.

GPA has also denounced that on December 16 US-pu pet jets in several waves bombed Phuoc Hung and Khanh Binh villages, An Phu district, An Giang province. A score of followers of the Hoa Hao religious sect were killed or wounded and sixty houses destroyed. Hundreds of people were rendered homeless. All the victims had been forcibly penned up by the US-puppets in one of their concentration camps and had lived for several years in the harsh conditions of the US-puppet detention regime.

THE DRVN 1970 STATE PLAN

CHE VIET TAN
Member of the State Planning Commission

THE implementation of the 1969 State plan has been successful. Fired by this achievement, the people of North Viet Nam are enthusiastically setting to fulfilling the State plan for 1970 aimed at strengthening further the economic and defence potentials of the country to ensure victory over the US aggressors and successful building of socialism.

The primordial task of the 1970 plan is to keep adequate and prompt supplies flowing to the front while continuing to strengthen and consolidate the rear area in all fields. On the other hand, it provides for the continuation of socialist construction along with bigger efforts to improve the people's living conditions.

To satisfy the considerable requirements of the front and the building and consolidation of the rear area with a view to defeating the US aggression, our 1970 State plan has laid down concrete tasks aimed at wiping out step by step the war aftermaths while carrying on the building and development of economy and culture in order to take North Viet Nam quickly and steadily to socialism. It will meet the immediate requirements and make preparations for still more vigorous development in the subsequent plans.

The prime target of this plan is to focus efforts on solving satisfactorily the question of cereals and foodstuffs ensuring the supply of the bulk of daily necessities, increasing the amount of everyday consumer goods, raising rapidly the output of a number of key heavy industries as well as raising the volume and value of exports in order to expand export capabilities.

Agriculture continues to be considered the basis to develop industry. Although it has made notable progress in the past years, agricultural production still remains small and backward, understandably still plagued with many problems and unbalance in some respects, since collectivization is of recent date and our country has been for a long period devastated by war.

The 1970 State plan for agriculture calls for intensive efforts toward a better handling of the problems of cereals and foodstuffs and, at the same time, more substantial advances toward a diversified agricultural economy. To this end, some of the most important measures have been outlined which will be implemented with determination, viz to strive to achieve all the acreage set by the plan, strictly observe the calendar fixed for various cultivations, step up intensive cultivation, effect step by step specialisation of given areas in certain main crops and animals, take an initial step in expanding the areas under industrial crops and livestock-breeding in the midlands and mountains. Apart from rice, which is our staple food plant to be given priority and of which the plan calls for greater efforts to attain both the target acreage and a high output, other food crops will also be expanded. Remarkably enough, in 1970 we are to launch a big campaign to build water conservancy projects, supply agriculture with more equipment and broaden the cultivation of high-yield rice species.

It is incumbent on **industry** to provide effective assistance to agriculture. By every means industry must exert an immediate and vigorous impact on agriculture in order to help it reach at the earliest date possible its three major objectives. On the other hand, industry must see to it that the people will be supplied with more and more consumer goods, first of all the most vital necessities. It must ensure that every person, every family has all the things needed in daily life. Local industry will be shaped up and developed in the light of the practical capabilities and particularities of each locality so that we may, in a relatively short period, achieve an initial balance between agriculture and industry and at the same time increase capital accumulation, continually to expand local economy and contribute to the development of national economy as a whole. Great attention will also be paid to the development of handicrafts and cottage industries in order to multiply by-trades in agriculture and make fuller use of idle manpower in the countryside and the towns for further expansion of the production of consumer goods.

Central industries will continue to be developed in a selective way. For the time being we are giving first priority to certain pivotal branches of heavy industry. Besides the common task of helping agricultural production, central industries must also effectively serve the program for development of local economy and, along with striving for the attainment of the norms set under the 1970 plan, must prepare the groundwork for vigorous future development.

As far as **transport and communications** are concerned, 1970 will see a freight volume several times bigger than in the past. That is why, along with the rapid repair and good utilisation of the existing means and the new ones to be supplied, this service is called upon to make the most of our great capabilities in improved conveyance means of the localities. The network of rural roads, in the plain as well as midlands, will be enlarged to lick into shape the communication system from the province capital down to each village.

With regard to the **goods interflow and distribution**, great importance should be attached to distribution work in the conditions of a still underdeveloped economy. At present, much remains to be done if the requirements in living conditions of our people are to be met adequately. Our people, however, are ready to accept austerity and privations in order to concentrate on the fighting against US aggression for national salvation. Therefore, we are trying to achieve the most radical distribution of goods with an eye to the practical needs of each social segment. At the same time, we will also strive to keep prices stable and further reduce the time spent on shopping so that everyone may have more time for rest and recreation after work.

In **culture, education and public health**, we have fixed norms which not only aim at satisfying the growing needs of the people but also to meet the large-scale program of training in order to prepare an ever larger contingent of scientific and technical personnel for ulterior development programs.

Our economy, thanks to the existence of a rich tropical agriculture, has been provided with the necessary material and technical foundations after 15 years of socialist construction, in spite of the damage wreaked by the American war of destruction. Our labour force has been growing at a fairly high rate every year. This represents a notable potential which we have to exploit adequately.

With this consideration in mind, in the 1970 plan our government will make further efforts to improve the management of the State, the economy and the labour force. 1970 will also be a year when the drive in production will be further pushed up in order to mobilize the whole social labour force to produce and work with a high productivity.

Since the last months of 1969, a stirring movement to translate into deeds President Ho Chi Minh's last instructions has been spreading widely in all branches of activity. Together with the clear directions of the State plan and international assistance, this revolutionary zeal will surely constitute a firm guarantee for our people to fulfil and overfulfil the 1970 plan.

Ricefield in Quynh Luu district (Nghe An Province)

A YEAR OF FIRM AND STEADY PROGRESS

FOR the Vietnamese people the year 1968 had been crowned by significant achievements: Washington had been forced into an unconditional end to air and naval bombardments against the DRVN, and acceptance of the NFL as a party at the four-sided conference in Paris; Johnson, the main responsible for the war, had been ousted from the White House. And so our people entered the year 1969 with the calm assurance of those who hold the key to final victory.

Nobody nurtured any illusion of an easy victory. We were perfectly aware that our enemy was rich, powerfully equipped, and determined to hang on. The new American President was no stranger to the Vietnamese people: in 1954, while the battle of Dien Bien Phu was raging, Richard Nixon, then Vice-President, had recommended US air and naval intervention to ease the pressure on the French colonialists. Cabot Lodge, appointed to take Harriman's place, had even before his nomination declared unambiguously his disbelief in the usefulness of the negotiations. Bunker, the US ambassador in Saigon, had been for a long time a staunch supporter of the puppets. Intensified bombing raids of destruction and extermination against thousands of localities in South Viet Nam especially in the neighbourhood of Saigon, clearly showed that all promises made by Nixon to reach a quick settlement were but electoral rhetoric. Just like the pledge made by Johnson in 1964 never to send the "boys" to fight a land war in Asia.

And so, in both North and South, the Vietnamese people, fired by their successes of 1968, kept up their effort in all fields — military, political, diplomatic — methodically and systematically, with renewed energy and confidence. They continued to strengthen their positions and to use their best weapons, which remained the firm resolve to fight on until final victory, the broadest union of all social strata behind a programme of independence, democracy, peace, neutrality, and close solidarity with the socialist countries and the whole of progressive mankind.

North Viet Nam slackened neither its vigilance nor its efforts to bring the South all possible help and support, while setting about rebuilding its economy which had remained vigorous in spite of intense American bombings. The fraternal ties binding the DRVN to the socialist countries were reinforced, this being embodied in their important aid to Viet Nam. The recognition of the DRVN by Sweden in January proved that beyond the socialist countries and the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the Vietnamese people's struggle had won the sympathy and support of the widest range of countries and social sections.

In the South, while relentlessly pressing their attacks against American and puppet forces, the NFL did not neglect the fight on the political and diplomatic fronts. The 10-point programme put forward in May by the NFL representative at the Paris talks answered the legitimate aspirations of broad strata of the Southern population and the wishes of world public opinion.

Late in May, a major event marked a historic turning point in the evolution of South Viet Nam: the birth of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG). Henceforth, the South Vietnamese people were represented by a government which, both *de facto* and *de jure*, was fully qualified to settle all problems concerning the country. Facing it, the Saigon puppet administration, more and more deliquescent, multiplied repressive actions not only against the partisans of the NFL but also against all who simply aspired to peace and neutrality. This did not prevent—far from it—the opposition from raising its voice ever more articulately, even in puppet assemblies. The proposal offered by the NFL then the PRG concerning a coalition government won the approval even of circles which had so far remained aloof from active politics.

In the United States, the year was marked by renewed interest in the Viet Nam problem of a public disappointed at Nixon's policy. Once the "honeymoon" over, the new President revealed himself as what he had always been, a die-hard warmonger. After extolling Thieu to the skies and proclaiming him one of the greatest statesmen of our times, after trying to deceive public opinion through token troop cutbacks, Nixon ended by unveiling his thought in his November 3 speech. Analysing this speech, the French paper *Le Monde diplomatique* wrote in December: "Nixon wants to negotiate only on the basis of recognition of the absolute authority of the legal government of General Thieu or of authorities enjoying absolute US confidence, which means a demand for a previous capitulation of the insurgents. In a word, his aim is to win the peace by trying to obtain at the conference table what could not be wrested after nine years of war" (Philippe Devillers). Such is the true meaning of his "Vietnamization."

American public opinion, anguished by the indefinite prolongation of a disastrous war and tired of the procrastination of a cunning administration, manifested its opposition in October, November and December. Never in US history had such a movement been seen, especially among the young. The disclosure of the Son My atrocities — one among a thousand crimes — brought American and world indignation to a peak. The prestige of the new President had been badly eroded after less than a year.

Thus, for the Vietnamese people, the past year was marked by firm and steady progress. The death of President Ho Chi Minh was an immense and immeasurable loss for all, but it was also an occasion for all to see how strongly the entire people were united and how actively the cause of Viet Nam was championed by world public opinion. No matter how obdurate the Nixon administration may be, the Vietnamese people, confident of their own strength and of the support of their friends the world over, remain ready to fight on until final victory. President Ho Chi Minh's last wishes will be realized.

Forward !

Our Total Triumph Is an Assurance Double Sure !

(Continued from page 1)

the resistance of the whole Vietnamese people against US aggression, for national salvation. Our socialist political, economic, cultural and ideological systems have made their great strength felt in the fight against the US aggressors. The material and technical foundations of our national economy are still very small, but they have proudly stood up to the onslaught of what was thought to be the unlimited material resources of the richest and strongest imperialist power.

THE Vietnamese people's fight against US aggression has been unfolding in the international context of the socialist camp growing stronger day by day, of the national liberation revolution surging up continuously and of the peace and democratic movement in the world unceasingly gaining momentum whereas the imperialist countries, first of all the US imperialists, have stumbled into many obstacles. The setbacks of the US imperialists in Viet Nam have further weakened the imperialist camp. The successes gained by our people have vigorously stimulated the movements for national independence, peace and democracy in various countries including the United States, and contributed to the safeguarding of the other socialist countries. The forces of the world socialist system continue to increase and the offensive posture of the world revolution continues to improve, whereas the forces of aggressive imperialism and the other reactionary forces have been racked with the agonies of disintegration.

The Vietnamese people's fight against the US imperialists' aggression is an important part and a spearhead of the world revolution, enjoying the support and assistance of all the other socialist countries, the peoples striving for independence and freedom and the progressive mankind as a whole.

TO defeat the US aggressors is a sacred and imperative task of our people. We must be on our mettle and bend all our strength and energy, all our manpower and material sources on the fight. We are resolved to translate into deeds the New Year wishes of President Ton Duc Thang: "Let our fellow-countrymen all over the country act upon President Ho Chi Minh's last directions, persist in, and carry through, the war of resistance to a finish to liberate the South, defend the North and achieve ultimate national reunification!"

In 1970 the Vietnamese people will celebrate four major anniversaries — the 40th founding anniversary of the Viet Nam Workers' Party, the centenary of the birth of Lenin, the 80th birth anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh and the 25th founding anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. 1970 must be a year of big efforts of our people throughout the country to secure great successes and impel vigorously forward our patriotic fight. Let us all march forward courageously!

Booby-traps and mines prepared by a militia unit in Vinh Linh, close to the 17th parallel

"POLITICAL PRISONERS"

THE large majority of these imprisoned in South Viet Nam are held because they oppose the (puppet) government; they are "political prisoners". Undoubtedly, a great many of these are, as the government classifies them, "Viet Cong". Legally speaking, they are properly prisoners-of-war although they are kept in a separate category from military prisoners. Others are "civilians related to Communist activities", i.e. V.C. agents, and are accurately classified as such. Still others, many of them detained without hearing or trial, should be classified differently. Some of these have been picked up in "search and destroy" sweeps and are innocent of anything save being present in an area of military operation. Others are clearly political prisoners.

Thieu — Ky Dictatorial Regime Revealed by American Study Team

(Continued)

They are nationalists, but are seen by the government as inimical to its continuing control. In the official statistics, very few "detainees" and "political prisoners" are so classified. The government places the vast majority of prisoners in either the "communist" or the "criminal" category...

Colonel Sanh, Director of Correctional Institutions, said that there are 35,000 prisoners in these Correctional Centers. The senior American advisor to Col. Sanh, Mr. Don Bordenkercher, estimated that in addition, there are 10,000 held in interrogation centers. He reported that the number had gone up gradually since the *Tet* offensive of 1968. Ambassador Colby, General Abrams' Deputy for Pacification, said that the number of prisoners had gone up and will continue to go up as the pacification program develops.

The national police in Saigon and in the provinces are the official organ for making arrests. In addition, there appear to be many other arrested and detention agencies. It is clear that those arrested are taken to a variety of detention centers for interrogation and that many are held in these centers for periods of time up to two years...

Doubtless, the total number of political prisoners in South Viet Nam... far exceeds the official statistics and estimates. Due to the wide range of arresting and detention agencies, and the inadequacy of statistical methods, no accurate count of prisoners can be made.

Members of the Study Team spent several hours at the Women's Prison (in Thu Duc) where the staff, headed by Prison Governor Minh, explained the prison's operation.

The cells and large prison rooms were overcrowded. This was especially hard on nursing mothers and those with small children. Fifty women, some with babies, lived in a crude building 40' by 30' (It equals 9.6 metres by 7.2 metres-*Ed.*). Sanitation was primitive and inadequate. There was evidence that some prisoners had not received needed medical attention.

Team members were especially concerned about the large number of prisoners who had not been sentenced after many months of detention, the looseness and inaccuracy of prisoner classification, the inhumanity of some sentences and the extreme youthfulness of many of the inmates. Governor Minh told the Team that there were fifty children from birth to 18 years of age in prison and forty young offenders from 13 to 17 years.

Chi Hoa is often referred to as the "showcase prison". The Warden said that there were about 5,500 men and boys now in prison. The Warden estimated that 40 per cent of the inmates had not yet been tried or sentenced. The Warden estimated that there were 200 children from 10 to 14 years of age and 300 from 16 to 18 in the prison not yet sentenced. Team members asked to see the children's section and were shown two cells. In one room, about 40 to 25 (12 to 8 metres) there were 47 children under 8 years of age. In the next cell, similar in size, there were 67 children slightly older but under 10 years.

The Team members saw three cells in the men's section the same size as the cells for children. There were about 50 men in each of the rooms viewed. None of men in these three cells had been sentenced. Upon asking to see the disciplinary cells, the Team members were shown a room with iron rings for shackling prisoners. The Team members did not get to see any of the 100 prisoners who the Warden said were in solitary.

Con Son Island Prison, an escape-proof prison about 50 miles off the southeast coast, is said by officials to contain 7,021 prisoners, most of them "political"... Many detainees had been imprisoned as long as a year and a half with little hope of being released unless, conceivably, a place was required for new prisoners. It was explained that frequently the means or records necessary to determine whether charges should be brought were unavailable. There was a failure to observe even a minimum amount of due process in the overwhelming majority of cases. The same circumstances were recited over and over by the prisoners; they were either being held on charges of sympathizing with or aiding the enemy, or they had been rounded up after a military action in their village and were held. Others were students who had indicated their support for peace.

The tour had been carefully arranged by prison officials. The only time the Team members deviated from the prepared pattern, successfully demanding to see Camp No 4 instead of the camp that the prison authorities had scheduled, they saw something of significance. There were large dark dormitory cells (there are 10 of about ten each cells were inspected) in which there were from 70 to 90 prisoners each, all of whom were condemned to life in prison. None had had lawyers of any trial other than a judgment by a military tribunal.

The prison authorities denied the existence of "tiger cages," reputed small barred cells in which prisoners being disciplined were chained to the floor in a prone position. Although recently released prisoners referred to this practice from actual experience, the Team members were unable to elicit any more from the prison officials than that the "tiger cages" were no longer in existence. One prisoner, however, speaking surreptitiously to the Team members said, in answer to a question, "Yes, the 'tiger cages' are here, behind Camp No 2 and Camp No 3. You looked in the wrong place"... On request, the visitors were shown two of these ten. They (the prisoners — *Ed.*) had been in solitary for six months because of the refusal to salute the (Saigon puppet) flag. One said he would never salute it. His legs were deeply marked. The Colonel in charge explained this was the result of a past disease. Questioned directly, the prisoner said it was the result of a long period in leg irons...

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CAPTURED US PILOTS' CHRISTMAS MESSAGES

CAPTURED US pilots now detained in North Viet Nam have sent Xmas messages to their dear ones back in the States. With the permission of the authorities concerned, we publish herebelow some of them:

From: **Robert Deane Woods**, US Navy Lieutenant camp of detention for US pilots captured in the DRVN.
To: Miss **Trankgarner Woods Rual Gru Delwiry**, Garden City, Missouri, USA.

Dear Dad, Mom, John and family.

I take this opportunity to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year for 1970. I am in good health and am comforted knowing that you are all well during this joyous season. I have just received your Christmas package on 23 December, 1969 and have received two other packages from you. I am very happy to receive them. I have been advised by the camp authority that now you may send more packages. Please send me some more pictures of you as they keep us closer together.

All my love

ROBERT DEANE WOODS

From: **Hugh Allen Stafford**, service number 614922, Lt-commander, camp of detention for US pilots captured in the DRVN.
To: Mrs **Hugh Allen Stafford**, 104 Belvedere Avenue, Cambridge, Maryland.

Season's greetings to all of you at home. Once again I have the chance to send you a Christmas message. I hope that all of you are well, especially grand mother and grand father. It seems a long time since my last Christmas at home, but we can still have many happy Christmases in the years to come. Try not to worry about me. I'm in the hand of a humane society and my health remains good. My love to all of you and let us hope for a happier New Year. Perhaps the coming year will bring a better chance for peace.

ALLEN

Xmas 1969 at a detention camp for US pilots in the DRVN

From: **Marklan Ligon Garthey**, Lt JG, USN, 703644, camp of detention for US pilots captured in the DRVN.
To: Mr and Mrs **Gerald A. Garthey**, Greenville, Maine.

Dear Mom, Dad and Jim, Merry Xmas and happy New Year. I wish I could be home with you all to celebrate but as it is, just make some extra strong egg-nog and have one for me. We celebrate this holiday with special meals, music, and a church service plus receiving your package. I received your present last Xmas and am looking foreward to the next one. Please buy a gift for yourselves from me. I am in good health and spirits and hope you are too. I have written to you but as yet have no reply. This makes my third Xmas away from you but this separation will make our next re-united holiday the best ever. Jim, you should study well and then raise hell in college — these are some of your best years. Use anything of mine you need for school. Mom and Dad, take care of yourselves and enjoy every minute you can. I'll do the same. Say hello to all my relatives and friends for me. Again Merry Xmas and all my love.

MARK

From: **William John Mayhew**, Lt, USN, 601368, camp of detention for US pilots captured in the DRVN.
To: Mrs and Mr **Steward H. Mayhew**, New Manchester, W.VA.

Dear Mom, Dad and Family,

I'm sure you'll be glad to hear my voice again. This will have to do this year as my Christmas present to you. Please have a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year and don't worry about me. They will make Christmas very pleasant for us here with a good Xmas dinner, lost of goodies, Xmas music, decorations, church services and I'll be looking forward to you Xmas package again this year. Please make Debele, Lori and Amy's Xmas especially good and buy them something nice for me. Nance and Vic, throw an extra log in the fireplace for me this Xmas. I think of you all a lot. I especially wonder what you're doing, Gary. I hope you're in college now. Take care of yourselves and keep your health, especially you Mom and Dad. I'm doing the same. My spirits and hope are high. Someday this long war will end and we'll have the best reunion ever. Please give my best regards and wishes for a happy holiday to my friends and the rest of the family. I love you all very much. May God bless you this Xmas and New Year.

Your loving son

BILL

D.R.V.N.
AND REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL SET UP DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

DESIROUS of reinforcing the relations of friendship between the two countries, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the Government of the Republic of Senegal have agreed to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries at embassy level.

(DRVN Foreign Ministry Dec. 29, 1969 communiqué)

HAIL THE ARAB PEOPLE'S STUBBORN RESISTANCE!

TENSION is mounting in the Middle-East. The US-supported Israeli aggressors obstinately refuse to withdraw from the Arab countries illegally occupied by them since 1967. In December last, they staged numerous attacks against Jordan and the suburbs of Damascus (Syria) and bombarded the United Arab Republic.

President Gamal Abdel Nasser of the UAR declared on Dec. 26 before a crowd of 60,000 Lybians at Tripoly: "We shall not accept any compromise. We have chosen the path of sacrifice and we shall fight until victory". Several other Arab governments have strongly come out against US dark schemes.

Incensed by the US and the Israeli aggressors who have wreaked untold death and destruction on their cities and villages, the Arab people are more determined than ever to rise up and fight back. The Palestineans are unifying their armed forces and stepping up their political and military actions. In many areas occupied by the enemy, large segments of the population have turned out in rallies and demonstrations against Israeli aggression. In the first 17 days of November, Palestinean guerillas launched 300 attacks against the aggressors, destroying over 100 military vehicles and one aircraft, burning two ammo depots, sacking an oil refinery and several troops barracks.

The Palestinean struggle enjoys active support from Arab countries. Armed forces of the UAR, Syria and Jordan have successfully countered Israeli onslaughts. In all Arab countries, the popular drive against the US and their Israeli stooges is gaining in strength. As a result of their stubborn fight, the Lybian government and people recently compelled the US to dismantle 4 military bases built in Lybian territory. Sudan, Lybian and Irak have decided to send new troop contingents to the Suez Canal and Jordan fronts to coordinate their military operations with the Arab countries.

Together with the people of socialist countries and progressive mankind, the Vietnamese people condemn the aggressive acts of US imperialists and the Israeli aggressors against the Arab countries and urge insistently that the Israeli aggressors withdraw all their troops from the Arab countries they have been illegally holding.

14th Founding Anniversary of the Laotian Patriotic Front (Jan. 6, 1970)

LAOTIAN PEOPLE'S HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL ANTI-US FIGHT FOR NATIONAL SALVATION

ON January 6 this year, millions of freedom, peace and justice lovers around the world will join the people of Indochina in warmly greeting the founding anniversary of the glorious Laotian Patriotic Front. Over the past 14 years, under the leadership of the LPF, the successor, and continuator of the work, of the former *Neo Lao Itsala*, headed by Prince Souphanouvong, the Laotian people, bringing into play their heroism and the invincible strength of the people's war, have dealt staggering blows at the US imperialists and their lackeys and won series of ever bigger military, political, diplomatic, economic, social and other successes.

Militarily, in only 5 years since the US imperialists launched their "special war" in Laos, the local armed forces and people have put 130,000 adverse troops out of action, seized or destroyed tens of thousands of tons of arms and war equipment, foiled all sweeps and encroaching operations against the liberated zone, shot down or destroyed more than 1,000 modern US aircraft and wiped out or captured many US pilots. In the process of the fighting, the military and para-military forces have unceasingly been growing and developing both quantitatively and qualitatively. Formerly capable of engaging and destroying or decimating only small enemy units, the Laotian patriotic armed forces are now able to rout or completely knock out whole battalions of adverse crack troops, equipped with modern US weapons, commanded by US military advisers and supported by US artillery and aircraft. The electrifying exploits in early spring 1968 at Nam Bac, the biggest US entrenched camp in Laos and an important staging area for, US mobile and special forces to nibble at the liberated areas in Upper Laos, as well as those at Pathi and Muong Sui in 1969 eloquently testify to this rapid advance. At Nam Bac, the valiant fighters of the Laotian patriotic armed forces destroyed an all-time record amount of enemy manpower in the history of the war against imperialist aggression in Laos: more than 4 out of the total 14 mobile groups of the US-puppet forces in Laos were completely disabled or disbanded. Recently, in November last, as a punishing blow to the enemy who mounted incursions against the liberated areas in the Plain of Jars - Xieng Khuang sector, the armed forces of Xieng Khuang province fought off the raiders, wiping out nearly 1,000 of them, seized or putting out of commission 163 weapons of different types, 6 military vehicles and hundreds of tons of military equipment. The Xieng Khuang provincial airfield was subjected to a surprise attack during which a guard company was completely struck off the charge. *Radio Pathet Lao* reported that since the enemy began his Operation "Kou Kiet" in the Plain of Jars - Xieng Khuang area, the patriotic armed forces had inflicted nearly 4,000 adverse casualties (from Nov. 1, 1969 to Dec. 10, 1969).

Along with these military achievements, the liberated zone, whose establishment is a substantial gain of the Laotian revolution, with two-thirds of the country's territory and one half of its population, has been experiencing continual changes and its future has been becoming brighter day by day. In spite of fierce enemy raids agriculture has been steadily developing. In 1967 the cultivated area nearly doubled, compared with previously; thousands of hectares double-crop fields were adequately irrigated; many areas even grew dry crops, on an annual average of 750 manioc plants per capita; many administrative offices became self-sufficient in food for one or two months per year and the amount of rice thus saved was donated to armymen at the frontline.

In the social field, the health network has been extended from central level to various localities, bringing medical care to people of various nationalities in the liberated zone, and it keeps widening: at present, 16 provinces have their own hospitals, and 40 districts and more than 200 villages their own medical stations.

In education, under the "self-reliance with people's help and all-out effort to overcome difficulties and supply education with necessary facilities" guideline the Laotian people have had remarkable accomplishments to their credit. In the last school-year, the enrolment in Sam Neua province alone rose by nearly 60% with more than 1,000 pupils and more than 200 well-ventilated school-houses. In Muong Sai province, 197 teachers have been trained and are working. In 1967, illiteracy was done away with in 40 villages. Active preparations are under way for the establishment of the first free university.

In the cultural field, the fine, healthy seeds of the national, popular and progressive culture are budding forth in sharp contrast with the enslaving, depraved culture, strongly influenced by the American way of life, in the areas still under enemy control. The Laotian folk dance and song and circus troupes, still very young, have been given a warm ovation by the peoples of brotherly countries during their tour abroad.

Under the clearsighted leadership of the Laotian Patriotic Front, the revolutionary struggle of the Laotian people has been steadily progressing. With its historic 12-point Political Programme, the LPF has succeeded not only in rallying more and more people of various social strata for a united action against aggression for national salvation, but also in winning the increasing confidence and support of the entire socialist camp and people who cherish peace, freedom and justice all over the world.

The Committee of Alliance of Laotian Patriotic Neutralist Forces, set up in April 1969 with Khamsouk Keola as its Chairman and General Khammuone and Colonel Deuane as its Vice-Chairmen, has recognised the role of the LPF in its 5-point Programme of Action: "In the hard and selfless combat the LPF (*Neo Lao Haksat*) has become a genuinely patriotic force, a powerful force truly representative of various segments of the people and various nationalities in Laos; it has a judicious line and policy relevant to the struggle for independence, peace and democracy and, at the same time, an imaginative policy of neutrality and has won success after success in mobilising and leading the entire Laotian people in a courageous effort".

As a close neighbour and comrade-in-arms of the Laotians, our people warmly greet the 14th founding anniversary of the LPF and hail the great and all-round successes obtained by the Laotian people in the past 14 years as common successes of historic significance of the 40 million Indochinese in their long and hard but surely victorious fight against the common enemy—the US imperialist aggressor.

NGUYEN VAN THIEU's FASCIST MOVES

ON December 29, 1969 alone, the Saigon puppet administration closed down eight Saigon papers which had dared to censure the US-paid regime. One of these papers was reported by a Saigonese source as advocating South Viet Nam's "neutrality".

On the same day, Thieu-Ky-Khiem issued warrants against fifteen students' leaders, including the President of the Students' Union, on the grounds that they had held "unlawful" meetings during which anti-war songs were sung.

Arbitrary warrants were also served in the last few days on those who did not see eye to eye with the junta like Nguyen Thanh Vinh, secretary general of an organization of the opposition and erstwhile "Speaker of the Saigon Constituent Assembly" in 1967.

With those fascist measures, the Saigon administration just gave a warning to the opposition and brought pressure to bear on the "Lower House" to vote for the disqualification of three "MPs" accused by Thieu for "having contacts with the communists". On December 30, 1969, the "Lower House" met to debate the puppet President's indictment. Despite terror operations, including a large-scale deployment of police force around the "Parliament", many "MPs" flatly rejected Thieu's accusation, Western sources reported. On the contrary, they took up the cudgels on behalf of their three colleagues and denounced the accuser. "We are witnessing the dirtiest law suit of the Second Republic," said a MP who went on to say that Nguyen Van Thieu wanted to suppress his opponents for he had private ends to pursue.

The latest news report said the "Lower House" had turned down Thieu's request to lift the immunity of the three MPs concerned. The deputies in fact were afraid that should they comply with Thieu's injunction, they would experience their own downfall at the hands of that unfledged dictator.

WITH *VIETNAMIZATION*, THE UNITED STATES...

(Continued from page 2)

those who have with their own hands killed so many Vietnamese women and children but mainly with those who have launched and have been pursuing the war of aggression in Viet Nam.

At the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal, many witnesses among them American militarymen, strongly denounced the barbarous tortures and massacres committed by US troops against PLAF fighters and South Vietnamese civilians fallen into their hands. Recently, many American servicemen have revealed other slayings by US troops in South Viet Nam.

Americans are severely condemning the above crimes and pressing for the cessation of the aggressive war in Viet Nam and the prompt return of their sons. The US ruling circles are trying to stamp out this opposition and incense American public opinion with the question of American pilots captured in North Viet Nam.

It should be pointed out that the American pilots detained in North Viet Nam are criminals who bombed the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam on orders of the US government and were caught red-handed in the act of offences of which you have no doubt noticed the traces during your visit to our country.

When adhering to the 1949 Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war, the DRVN made an explicit reserve on Article 85, "The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam declared that war prisoners prosecuted and tried for their war crimes or grave crimes against humanity, in accordance with the principles laid down by the Nuremberg Tribunal, are not entitled to benefit from the provisions of this Convention as stipulated by Article 85."

The American pilots captured in North Viet Nam are subject to the jurisdiction of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam—an independent and sovereign country—in conformity with the laws now in force.

In spite of their crimes against the Vietnamese people, they have so far always enjoyed humanitarian treatment from the DRVN Government; they are allowed to write to, and receive parcels from, their families on such occasions as Christmas; the wounded have been given medical care. A number of them have been released and have returned to their families in the United States.

In their ten-point overall solution, the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam have suggested negotiations between the parties concerning the release of militarymen captured during the war. However, the Nixon administration has refused to take this solution as basis for the settlement of the Viet Nam problem, and has downgraded the Paris Conference on Viet Nam. It must bear full responsibility for the delayed settlement of the question of militarymen captured during the war as well as the Viet Nam issue as a whole.

QUESTION 3 — *The day will come when the war in Viet Nam will end. Public opinion in Japan is much interested in the post-war problems in Viet Nam, and considers Japan could play a role in putting an end to the war and lend her help to the reconstruction of Viet Nam in peace. Would you speak of the post-war problems in Viet Nam and South-East Asia?*

ANSWER — I thank our Japanese friends for their interest in the post-war problems of Viet Nam. In the reconstruction of our country, we will rely mainly on our own force, at the same time highly value the co-operation and fraternal assistance from the other socialist countries as well as the co-operation and assistance from other countries on the basis of respect for our country's independence and sovereignty, and of equality and mutual benefit.

Of late, as can be read into the Nixon-Sato joint communique, the Japanese reactionary authorities and the US imperialists have strengthened their collusion; the US has been holding on to the so-called "Japan-US Security Treaty", and to Okinawa. This proves that the US will continue to use its bases in the Japanese territory for their aggression in Viet Nam, and schemes to use Japan as a shock brigade for seizing control of Asia and the Pacific, realize neo-colonialism and pursue its role as an international gendarme. For their part, the Japanese reactionary authorities intend to rely on the US to materialize their dream of "expansion" in Asia, which in fact would make the sovereignty and future of Japan dependent on the US imperialists' policy of aggression and war in that part of the world.

For their selfish interests, the Japanese reactionary authorities are harming the relations of friendship between the Japanese and Vietnamese peoples, and the true interests of Japan in Asia at present and in future. For all its perfidious manoeuvres, the Sato administration, however, will not be able to deceive public opinion. The Japanese people are now intensifying their struggle against the US war of aggression in Viet Nam and against the Sato administration's reactionary policy of turning Japan into a base for the US aggressors. They are demanding that the US return Okinawa to Japan immediately, completely and unconditionally, and abolish the "Japan-US Security Treaty".

We sincerely thank the Japanese people for their constant and strong support to our patriotic resistance war.

On the occasion of the New Year, we convey to the Japanese people our best wishes for happiness and brilliant success in their valiant fight for an independent, democratic, peaceful and neutral Japan, for peace and security in Asia and the world.

TO THE READER

We are aware that there is much room for improvement in the wording of our paper. We apologize for this shortcoming and highly appreciate all your suggestions as they will help us to serve you more efficiently in future.

Anti-War Demonstrations in Saigon

(Continued from page 8)

These Americans had previously distributed to newsmen leaflets calling on everyone, Americans and Vietnamese alike, to take part in an action for peace.

This Christmas, one of the leaflets said, we are gathering peacefully in Saigon to voice our desire to see peace come back to Viet Nam. More than one million people have died and casualties are growing every day. The war has lasted too long. Stop the slaughter. We young men of America and Viet Nam call upon all the countries involved in the Viet Nam war to agree to a permanent ceasefire before the Lunar New Year (February 6, 1970). We call on all peoples in the world, the leaflet went on, to join in the struggle for peace in Viet Nam. The tragedy is enlarging every day, join the struggle for peace now!

According to *AFP*, Boyle, an American pacifist, speaking to the participants, said he had every reason to believe that some US units in Viet Nam would refuse to fight this winter. He said he thought the number of GIs who disobey combat orders would rise to several hundreds.

Leo Dorsey, another American pacifist, declared that nobody had urged the GIs to take part in the demonstration. They had come, he said, because they wanted to.

Alarmed, the US authorities in Saigon and their henchmen Thieu-Ky-Khiem sought every way to disperse the war protesters.

A big force of well-armed policemen threw a cordon at all the crossroads around the cathedral.

A colonel of the US Army came with a loud speaker and brandished threats at the demonstrators. A number of arrests were made.

In South Viet Nam: *Supplies flowing to the front*

1969, A YEAR OF GREAT SUCCESSES
—MILITARY, POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC— OF THE NFL AND PRG

(Dec. 31, 1969 PLAF Command Communique)

- ⊙ **PLAF Offensive Posture Successfully Maintained and Improved.**
- ⊙ **PLAF Able To Mount Unremitting and Sustained Attacks.**
- ⊙ **Tremendous Military, Political and Diplomatic Achievements.**
- ⊙ **"Vietnamization" of the War Severely Hurt.**
- ⊙ **US Aggressors' Rear Shaken to Its Foundations.**

A PLAF unit on the march

ON December 31, 1969, *Giai Phong* Press Agency released the PLAF Command communique on the situation in South Viet Nam in 1969.

After drawing the initial battle-count (still incomplete, see box) of enemy losses, the communique stresses the significance of these successes which boils down to the following five points:

1— In 1969, the PLAF maintained and improved their offensive posture and won very important successes despite adverse massive utilization of brutal and inhuman war methods as B52 carpet-bombings, noxious chemicals and prohibited gases. All the three categories of troops (regular army, regional troops and guerilla units) fought well, dealing heavy blows at the enemy (nerve centres, combat units, bases and trunk communication lines). His losses as known to this date, were in certain respects heavier than the previous year when the famous general offensive and concerted uprisings took place at the *Tet* (the Monkey Lunar New Year day).

2— This aggressiveness proved to be very great and sustained. This striking feature is important as it marks a new turn in the period of general offensive and uprisings and is a further proof that the South Viet Nam patriotic forces are quite in a position to drub the enemy.

3— In 1969, besides feats of arms, the South Viet Nam people achieved important successes in the political and diplomatic fields: formation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and prompt recognition of it by the socialist countries and nationalist states; statement of the famous "ten-point position" whose fair and constructive approach offered a sound solution to the war and testified eloquently to the good will of the NFL and PRG. Far from shaking the will of the South Viet Nam people and armymen, the much-mourned death of respected President Ho Chi Minh has stiffened their resolve to fight and activated the support of the world's peoples to our struggle.

4— The "Vietnamization" of the war was grievously hurt. All the enemy's ambitions in this scheme were thwarted. Compared with 1968, US casualties were heavier; a quantity of war means were destroyed; the "accelerated pacification" was stopped and pushed back while enemy forces were more battered; the puppet troops were more vulnerable and their desertion as well as the jerry-built character, rottenness and isolation of the puppet ruling clique increased; dissensions among the traitors to the country grew more critical.

5— The 1969 successes had widespread repercussions behind the US aggressors' lines. Despite Nixon's attempts to hush up, never had, in the history of the US, the protest movement against the Viet Nam war been so extensive among progressives who urged an end to the US aggressive war, total and immediate withdrawal of US troops and respect for the Vietnamese people's right to settle their internal affairs themselves without outside interference. The Washington rulers' political alienation was great at home and abroad.

THE communique then makes it clear that the substantial successes of 1969 were essentially due to the just line of general offensive and uprisings, to the invincibleness of the people's determination to fight and to win and the unshakable solidarity which sealed together our people and armymen in the South.

Recalling that despite heavy setbacks the enemy is still very stubborn and perfidious and that our struggle remains very complex and fraught with difficulties, the communique calls on our people and armymen to continue the national tradition of heroism and grim determination in order to strike hard at the GIs, satellite and puppet troops, inflict on them heavier losses, foil all their vicious schemes and achieve greater results.

The communique appeals to the puppet officials and armymen's national consciousness and exhorts them to take appropriate measures to save their lives and honour by dissociating themselves from the alien aggressors and their lackeys, the Thieu-Ky-Khiem clique.

The communique concludes with a resounding appeal to our South Viet Nam fellow-countrymen, urging them to fulfil their national and international lofty mission, so as to deserve the signal honour to be a people, as says President Ho Chi Minh's Testament, of a small nation that has valiantly beaten two big imperialisms—the French and the American.

PRELIMINARY 1969 BATTLE-COUNT

★ **650,000 enemy casualties including 235,000 GIs and satellite troops** *(as against 630,000 and 230,000 in 1968 respectively).*

★ **5 adverse brigades, 1 regiment, 3 multi-battalion units, 122 battalions, 130 "pacification" teams and nearly 900 companies wiped out or decimated.**

★ **A huge quantity of arms, ammunition, war materials and equipment destroyed including 6,400 planes and helicopters, 19,000 military vehicles** *(10,900 tanks and armoured cars)*, **2,500 ordnance pieces** *(more than double the 1968 figure)*, **1,700 vessels and combat launches** *(nearly twice as in 1968)*

Anti-War Demonstrations in Saigon

AT 9 p.m. on Christmas Eve thousands of students together with many Catholics, Buddhists and teachers in Saigon held a demonstration for peace, cessation of the war and reduction of the price of rice and the cost of living. *Giai Phong Press Agency* reported.

Chorusing a song of peace, the protesters marched along the city's main thoroughfares where they were joined by numerous passers-by.

Two big streamers were put up in the van of the marching columns, reading: "We protest those who are plotting to prolong the war in Viet Nam!", "Cut the rise of price and the cost of living!" The demonstrators also released peace doves while chanting, "Down with the war!", "Long live peace in Viet Nam!", "Stop immediately the war in Viet Nam!"

Police opened up and made many arrests.

Later leaflets were found in many Saigon streets urging abolition of the 10-68 law of the puppet clique, release of the arrested, replacement of the Thieu-Ky-Khiem administration by a peace cabinet ready to negotiate seriously with the NFL and the PRG of the Republic of South Viet Nam.

Also in Saigon, another demonstration against the US war in Viet Nam near the city main cathedral in the John Kennedy Square on Christmas Eve by a group of American pacifists, is reported by Western sources.

(Continued page 7)